Moderators' Report
Principal Moderator Feedback
Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama (1DR0)

1DR0/01: Devising

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1DR0: GCSE Drama Summer 2023

1DR0/01 – Devising

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)

Internally Assessed / Externally Moderated

Introduction

This is the fourth year of examination of the three component GCSE specification 1DR0, with the two-year break from examinations due to the pandemic; as such, the NEA component 1DR0/01 is still relatively new to a lot of centres; however, it is well-supported by a myriad of online resources and INSET events that are available to access for free on the Pearson website.

This report is designed to offer support to centres by highlighting positives from the 2023 series as well as outlining key areas for improvement when looking ahead to the 2024 series.

The Principal Moderator's report is to be used in conjunction with the support materials available on the Pearson website, such as the Administrative Support Guide (ASG) which is updated in the Autumn Term each year, to best support centres for the 2024 series:

Link to Pearson website:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FSpecification-and-sample-assessments

Further information and guidance is also available from the following services:

Subject specific content and teaching queries including *Ask the Expert* queries: teachingperformingarts@pearson.com

Assessment administration including request for permission for non-assessed candidates, digital theatre, extension requests :

drama.assessment@pearson.com

General centre related queries including reporting lost coursework, requesting special requirements, queries regarding entries and results:

Pearson Qualifications Support - Contact Us

Content of 1DR0/01

The 1DR0/01 component is made up of Portfolio Evidence and a final Devised Performance, covering three Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO4 (Portfolio Evidence) and AO2 (The final Devised Performance/ Design Realisation). The focus of the component is the creation and development of a devised performance inspired by up to three centre-chosen stimuli which can be linked to a theme, topic or issue.

Key elements of content:

- For Paper 1DR0/01 candidates are provided with up to three stimuli, chosen by the teacher-assessor, to explore and use for the basis of their own devised performance. The stimuli MUST be selected and provided by the centre to support the candidates in

- The minimum group size is 3 performing candidates, and the maximum group size is 6 performing candidates. In addition, each group may have one designer from each of the skill areas; lighting, sound, costume and set design. This means that the minimum group size will always be 3 candidates and the maximum group size can be up to 10 candidates if each design option is utilised. It is not permitted to have two design candidates following the same skill assigned to the same group. In addition, it is not permitted for one designer to be assessed for their design skills across more than one group or performance.

- Candidates are not permitted to devise a duologue or monologue.

- If a candidate joins a centre after the component 1 assessment has taken place or a candidate leaves the centre so that a group of three performers becomes a group of two performers, then drama.assessment@pearson.com can be contacted in order to seek permission for non-assessed candidates to be used.

- Candidates are assessed on AO2; therefore, the teacher-assessor must provide evidence of the candidates' final Devised Performance and upload this to the LWT (Learner Work Transfer) with the candidates' Portfolio Evidence and all other supporting documentation; including the additional documentation for any design candidates.

- All Devised Performances MUST include candidate introductions by their full name and candidate number. The introductions should be on the beginning of the Devised Performance/ recording. The introductions must include any design candidates attached to the performance group. It is important that all introductions are audible and clear in order to support the moderation process.

- The candidates must produce Portfolio Evidence, which is used to assess candidates' work against AO1 and AO4. The Portfolio Evidence details the initial response to the stimuli, exploration of ideas, refinements and rehearsals and final evaluation and analysis of the process and the candidates' skill demonstrated in the final Devised Performance/ Design realisation.

- The word count for the Portfolio Evidence is a maximum of 2,000 words and must be adhered to; however, candidates also have the option to provide a verbal portfolio of up to 10 minutes of audio or camera recorded evidence. In addition, candidates can choose to provide the evidence using a mix of written and verbal formats with a word count of 700 – 1,000 words and a maximum time limit of 4-5 minutes. The purpose of the maximum word counts and time limits is to ensure that there is parity for all centres and candidates nationally. Therefore, any work produced beyond the maximum word counts and time limits must not be marked by the Centre and will not be considered for moderation. Word counts must be accurate and recorded on the CCIS form.

There is essential guidance for all centres about all GCSE Components in the Administrative Support Guide (ASG) document, which is updated for each series. Centres must download this annually from the Pearson website as soon as it is available in the Autumn Term. The Assessment forms for all three components are available as editable Word documents and Excel Spreadsheets on the Pearson website and these are also regularly updated and improved, as such centres should download the new forms annually.

All centres, including those entirely new to Pearson GCSE Drama for entry in 2024, are advised to re-visit the Specification document for further details of the requirements of the component. There are also other useful support documents available to download via the GCSE Drama Home Page including the GCSE Drama 9-1 Guidance for Component 1 Portfolio, the GCSE Drama Frequently Asked Questions and the Component 1 Exemplars, as well as past training materials with moderator commentaries to support centres in applying the National Standard.

The main link to the Drama home page is:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.html

And the link to the teaching and learning materials:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=Pearson-UK:Category%2FTeaching-and-learning-materials

Chosen Stimuli and Themes:

Popular themes for 1DR01.01 Devising included, but were not limited to:

- War/ Conflict – including WW1 and WW2 and the War in Ukraine
- Madness
- Mental health issues
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Eating disorders
- Terrorism – 911 & Manchester bombings
- Inequality across a range of areas: gender, sexuality, race and religion
- Outsiders
- Persecution/Standing up for your rights
- The impact of technology / social media
- Domestic violence
- Identity
- Immigration & refugees
- The impact of Covid, diseases and the pandemic

Pictures continue to be the most popular stimuli; however, Centres also use songs, poems, quotations, newspaper articles and specific words such as 'surveillance'.

The stimuli meant that several centres selected a narrative approach to the devising work whilst others created work that was more surreal and episodic. Stimuli tended to be largely literary with a significant proportion of centres using music, video and/ or printed/ digital images. Poems were also a popular choice with candidates using lines and words from poems in their final performances. Some centres issued a single word as a stimulus, such as 'Persecution', 'Inequality' and 'Terror', this supported some candidates in focusing on a theme and intention for the audience but was also limiting for many candidates as they were not given the opportunity to find their own meaning from the stimuli and research ideas for performance.

Centres also used single word stimuli to supplement written stimuli, such as news reports. The centres that utilised three very different stimuli materials saw their candidates produce work with more depth and development in terms of the plot, characterisation and communication of their intentions.

Pearson does not recommend any stimulus materials and there is no preferred stimuli format, content or theme. The choice of stimuli is the Centre's responsibility and as such it is important that centres issue materials that engage the interests of their candidates.

Centres can issue up to three different stimuli materials; however, they must not exceed this maximum.

Centres may wish to issue only one or two stimuli materials, this is permissible, but centres should consider if they have offered the candidates enough material to support their creative intentions.

Centres may issue different stimuli materials to different groups or classes within their centre, or they may wish to issue all candidates the same stimuli materials; again, this is the Centre's responsibility and there is no preferred approach.

Centres must consider the suitability of any stimuli issued to candidates or of chosen themes. All materials **must be age appropriate.** Moderators in 2022 and 2023 reported an increase in devised performances that explored topics such as sexual violence, rape and suicide often in graphic detail.

There was an increase in 2023 of centres who had used a play-text as the stimulus for the Devised Performance, or had allowed the candidates to use sections of a play text within their devised work. This is not in line with the Specification requirements. Play-texts are explored in Component 2 and Component 3, and as such are not permitted in Component 1 and centres are advised that if a play text is issued as a stimulus for Component 1, it may have an impact on the moderation process. Further details are available in the Frequently Asked Questions document and the Specification.

Specification:
https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Drama/2016/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/GCSE2016_L12_Drama_Issue_2_Specification.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions:
https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Drama/2016/teaching-and-learning-materials/GCSE-Drama-FAQ.pdf

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher in facilitating the devising process is key in terms of candidate achievement, as is the choice of stimuli/ theme/ topic. Less effective choices in 2023 included stimuli, topics and themes that candidates could not relate to, or felt uncomfortable with, such as violent acts and physical assaults. Or where the candidates had moved away from their initial intention, meaning that the work produced lacked structure and direction. Positive choices showed the teacher as facilitator, enabling candidates the strategies to explore the stimuli effectively, allowing them to be clear on their intention for the audience and to make the needed refinements to communicate effectively with their audience. Teacher-assessors had clearly worked hard to ensure that candidates had been taught how to devise and had been given opportunities to collaborate where possible.

The Portfolio Evidence

The practical exploration of the stimuli, the devising, rehearsing and refining processes and the analysis and evaluation of the planned intention and the final performance are captured in the candidates' Portfolio Evidence.

The Portfolio Evidence can be presented in the following ways, with no preferred format:

- handwritten/typed evidence between 1500 and 2000 words or

- recorded/verbal evidence between 8 and 10 minutes or

- a combination of handwritten/typed evidence (between 750 and 1000 words) and recorded/verbal evidence (between 4 and 5 minutes)

The majority of Portfolio Evidence sent for moderation in 2023 was typed evidence, with some examples of verbal portfolios and a few examples of a combination of both formats.

The Portfolio Evidence was most successful when the six questions, as set out in the Specification, were addressed across the work, or used as headings to structure the Portfolio Evidence. Candidates must be given the opportunity to record the exploration, refinements, and rehearsal processes over the course of the component. These notes may then be used to support the completion of the final Portfolio Evidence. It was clear that several centres had completed the Portfolio Evidence in stages across the process, with the candidates completing question 1 and 2 immediately after they had responded to the stimuli materials and completed their initial exploration of the stimuli deciding on an intention for the audience. This was a supportive approach, allowing candidates to record their ideas as they occurred making for more analytical and reflective responses overall.

In many centres, candidates recorded accurate word counts or timings for their Portfolio Evidence on their work or on the CCIS form; however, many centres failed to provide this information or the information was not accurate. There was an increase of cases where the word count recorded on the CCIS form was 2,000 words; however, in reality the work was often well over the maximum word count. It is important that the maximum timing or word counts for the Portfolio Evidence are recorded on the documentation and adhered to, as any work beyond the maximum must not be assessed by the teacher-assessor and will not be moderated. In cases where the word limit was exceeded, some of the best work came after the 2,000 words, and often all of the responses for question 5 and question 6 could not be considered which had a

significant impact on the assessment of AO4 analysis and evaluation. Furthermore, some candidates produced work that was significantly under the wordcount or timings, this did not allow the candidates the opportunity to write analytically and in depth and was therefore self-penalising. Centres are reminded that this is a coursework component and feedback can be given on the first draft of the work; therefore, candidates can be given the opportunity to edit their work ensuring that they do not exceed the word count. It is not permissible for the teacher-assessor to select sections of the candidates' work, across the whole evidence, to omit from the total wordcount, the section that should not be marked is the final section of the work.

Most of the Portfolio Evidence was word processed and structured using the six questions. Some centres provided additional questions and writing frames which were not always supportive and are not in line with the JCQ guidance on the use of writing frames for NEAs. Some candidates chose to write in continuous prose, and this was effective when the six questions were addressed and embedded in their work; however, some candidate responses lost focus or did not fully address the demands of all of the six questions as outlined in the Specification. Some of the best work used the six questions as a structure for the Portfolio Evidence and saw students writing detailed responses to question 3 and 4, which supported the AO1 mark.

Design candidates generally included the additional documentation that is a requirement of all design skills; however, there was an increase in 2023 of candidates who did not produce the Additional Documentation. Design candidates must answer or address the same six questions as performance candidates, and all Additional Documentation that must be provided as an appendices to the Portfolio Evidence. In addition, all design candidates must ensure that they stay focused on their design skill and are not tempted to discuss the acting, the same is true of some performance candidates who spent large portions of their 'significant moments' or questions 5 and 6 addressing the inclusion of design aspects rather than focusing on moments that supported and developed their role as performers. Additional information and support in answering the portfolio questions is available on the Pearson website, this includes how the design candidates can respond to the questions.

Guidance for Component 1 Portfolio:
https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/secure/silver/all-uk-and-international/gcse/drama/2016/teaching-and-learning-materials/GCSE-Drama-9-1-guidance-for-Component-1-portfolio.pdf

In 2023, candidates included health and safety requirements in their Portfolio Evidence; however, this year a significant number of candidates and centres failed to cover this area which is one of the essential areas of coverage as outlined in the Specification. Centres are therefore reminded that candidates must be taught discreetly about health

and safety issues and then consider health and safety issues during the process. These health and safety considerations must be documented in their Portfolio Evidence. Health and safety considerations can be addressed across any of the six questions, or in a separate section if that is more appropriate for the candidates. More guidance can be found in Guidance for Component 1 Portfolio on the Pearson website.

In question 1, the best responses were kept brief. Candidates were able to communicate how they felt about the stimuli with insightful personal responses. The best responses were from candidates who had a connection with the stimuli and were able to communicate clear intentions for performance with an audience focus. Were students did less well, the responses focused on describing the stimuli materials with little personal connection.

In question 2, candidates are asked to discuss how the stimuli was initially explored. Many candidates explained their research in this section of their Portfolio Evidence. Whilst research is pivotal to the process, and produced some very thought-provoking devised work, the demands of this question mean that candidates should focus on how drama strategies were used to explore the stimuli. This question is about the practical exploration that candidates completed in the drama studio. It is not about the research and discussions that took place.

In question 3, candidates should aim to discuss several significant moments during the devising process. The best responses analysed and evaluated moments in the drama studio where candidates added drama strategies and changed or adapted the structure. The most effective responses focused on the intentions for performance and planning for an audience response. The less effective responses were more generic and narrative in approach. They often focused on feedback from their class and peers or conflicts that they had within the group in terms of group dynamics or a student leaving or joining their group.

In question 4, candidates must cover all areas of the question: genre, style, form, structure, language and characterisation. In the most effective responses, candidates selected three or four moments from their devised performance and analysed and evaluated these moments in detail making reference to all of the elements of the question. This led to very detailed responses that demonstrated an assured use of drama terminology, assured collaboration and comprehensive refinements and rehearsals. In the less effective responses candidates either did not cover all of the areas in the question, or they approached the question like a list which led to a lack of depth to the response.

Some centres had encouraged candidates to reflect upon practitioner theory which is not a specific focus for GCSE; however, in the most part this enabled candidates to meet

the demands of question 4 when addressing choices of structure, genre, form, language and character. In addition, candidates were particularly successful when the teacher-assessor had clearly taught the candidates discretely about genre, style, form, structure, language, and characterisation to communicate intentions to the audience. Those candidates that has been taught how to devise effectively; research, refine and rehearse their work, achieved better outcomes, as did those who had an assured grasp and use of drama terminology.

In question 5, candidates who were the most successful analysed and evaluated their skill in the final performance. The candidates' 'contribution' in this question must focus on the final performance and how their acting or design realisation contributed to the assessed performance. Candidates who did less well in this question, did not stick to their own skill or they drifted into analysing and evaluating their contributions during the process of devising with little focus on the end performance. In addition, some performance candidates discussed their contribution to design elements and some designers discussed their contribution to the direction of the performers. The Portfolio Evidence and the six questions, as outlined in the specification, are designed to take the candidates on a journey through the devising process. Questions 1 and 2 focus on the early stages of devising. Questions 3 and 4 focus on the refinements and rehearsals, the collaboration and the planning for an audience response. Question 5 and 6 focus on the final performance and the analysis and evaluation of their contribution through their skill and the realisation of their intentions for performance.

In question 6, the candidates who offered the most effective responses analysed and evaluated several moments during their final performance with a consistent and detailed focus on the intentions for performance and how effectively these were achieved. Less effective responses, were often very short and did not give clear examples to justify their evaluative comments.

Teacher-assessors were much more accurate in their application of the assessment criteria in 2023. This was the case across all of the Assessment Objectives, but particularly for AO2 and AO4. Some Centres that tended to be lenient were so when applying the mark for AO1, possibly due to the larger range of marks available for this assessment objective. There was also evidence of centres awarding marks for what they had witnessed in the classroom in terms of the process, refinements and rehearsals, rather than assessing the Portfolio Evidence discreetly for AO1 and AO4. Candidates can only receive marks for AO1 based upon the evidence they provide in their Portfolio Evidence. In addition, some candidates produced Portfolio Evidence that was secure, but this was not fully credited by the teacher- assessor, possibly due to their lack of collaboration in the classroom.

Some teacher-assessors only awarded AO4 marks for question 5 and 6 of the Portfolio Evidence rather than awarding evidence of AO4 analysis and evaluation across the whole Portfolio Evidence. Candidates should be taught to analyse and evaluate for each of the six questions of coverage. In addition, where there was evidence of verbal portfolios the teacher-assessor tended to be lenient in their application of AO1 and in particular AO4 as many of the verbal portfolios provided for moderation contained very little evaluation, with some isolated analysis.

General summative advice for centres, based on the 2023 series:

Candidates should:

- Ensure that they cover the six questions and essential areas of coverage as outlined in the Specification.
- Ensure they make full use of the word count/ timings to allow for the detail of analysis required and the comprehensive explanations needed to access marks at the higher level; however, ensure that they do not produce work beyond the maximum word count as this will not be considered in the final assessment.
- Ensure they include health and safety considerations into their working practices and their Portfolio Evidence.
- Avoid general discussion and ensure that they analyse and evaluate across the whole of the Portfolio Evidence.
- Ensure they use drama terminology to clearly explain and analyse the 'drama' that took place when devising, rehearsing and refining and in the final performance/ design realisation.
- Ensure that they stay focused on their performance/ design skill throughout the Portfolio Evidence.
- Ensure that for question 2, they discuss the exploration of the stimuli material that took place in the drama studio, using explorative strategies such as still images, hot-seating, thought tracking, forum theatre etc.
- Ensure that for question 4, all the areas are discussed; characterisation, genre, style, form, structure and language – by analyse and evaluating key moments of the process and performance, rather than responding in a list that is generic and lacks depth.
- Ensure that in question 5 and 6 they stay focused on their skill in the final performance, rather than focusing on the process. Candidates should analyse and evaluate how their skill contributed to the final performance.
- Ensure they use the first person when writing their Portfolio Evidence as this is supportive in responding to the six questions.

Teacher-assessors should:

- Explicitly teach candidates how to devise with a focus on structure, style, genre, form, characterisation and language.
- Ensure that candidates are placed in a minimum group size of 3 performance candidates to a maximum group size of 6 performers.
- Ensure that only one design candidate for each skill is attached to any given group.

- Facilitate the devised work by offering engaging stimuli materials that are age appropriate with a maximum of 3 stimuli issued in total.
- Intervene if the candidates' chosen intention or theme is not appropriate for GCSE aged candidates.
- Offer opportunities for candidates to record clear examples for their notes (during the devising process), to support the completion of the Portfolio Evidence
- Offer appropriate support to enable candidates to cover the six questions and essential areas of coverage as outlined in the specification.
- Check notes carefully to guard against plagiarism and to ensure that sources have been acknowledged.
- Encourage candidates to write in the first person using 'I' to help guard against work from the same group being too similar.
- Support candidates in understanding and addressing health and safety issues.
- Ensure all candidate who select a design skill complete the additional documentation and that this is included in with their Portfolio Evidence.
- Ensure that design candidates focus on their chosen skill when addressing the six questions as outlined in the specification.
- Offer written feedback on one draft of the Portfolio Evidence with comments focused on the assessment criteria only.
- Support candidates by setting appropriate deadlines.

The Final Performance/ Design:

The requirement of the component is for each candidate to perform in, or design for, a final devised performance. This must be recorded from a **fixed camera** position and uploaded to the LWT (if part of the sample) and stored in a secure place in the centre.

The quality of the recording is of paramount importance; centres must ensure that they are able to produce a clear, good quality recording for the moderator. It is important that the candidates are clearly visible on the recording and that there is good sound quality. Lighting should also be carefully considered when recording the work for moderation so that the performer's facial expressions can be clearly seen. Further details about the importance of the recording are available in the ASG document.

The majority of centres provided their recorded evidence on the LWT. In the vast majority of cases, recordings were clearly labelled with the group number and candidate number. Equally most recordings were of good quality, with some examples of excellent practice. The best practice was seen where the teacher-assessors had seemingly viewed the recording although this is not a requirement of the specification.

Candidates must identify themselves on the recording with clear statement of full name and candidate number: this is for both performance and design candidates. In 2023, whilst many centres had ensured that candidates were easily identifiable, moderators reported that identification was still a problem with some work. It is paramount that

identifications take place directly before the recording of the performance and ideally with no breaks in the recording so that the candidates' appearance in the identification is the same as their appearance in the performance. It is also important that candidates wear costumes/ clothing that makes them easily identifiable for moderation purposes. Theatre 'blacks', whilst understandable in many ensemble style performances, does not support the moderation process. In addition, centres must ensure that the introductions are clearly audible and are not rushed. Moderators reported that in 2023, they often had to listen to the introductions several times to accurately ascertain who the candidates were before they could moderator the work.

Centres are reminded that they must not select more than four performance groups for the purposes of moderation and where possible, all of the candidates in a performance group should be selected for moderation. Some centres could have sent the work of two performance groups; however, four groups were uploaded to the LWT with not all of the candidates included in the sample.

There were very few instances of recordings that would not play, or partial recordings being uploaded to the LWT; however, there were several cases where centres had to contact Pearson for 'lost coursework' due to the evidence of the final Devised Performances being lost or the files being corrupted. Centres must ensure that they backup all files on their centre's system. There were also a few centres who had stated that candidates were absent on the day of the performance so had not provided AO2 evidence for these candidates, even though this is a coursework component, and the work could have been filmed at a different time. Centres must ensure that all candidates' work is captured on film, even if this is not on the day assigned by the centre to complete the work. If a candidate does not perform in the final work or their design is not used, then they must not receive a mark for AO2. In addition, the lack of participation in the Final Performance/ design will also impact their ability to answer question 5, 'their contribution to the final performance' in their Portfolio Evidence.

In 2023, there was a significant increase in the amount of centres using non-assessed candidates. Some centres had not been given permission to use non-assessed candidates and the moderation team had to advise these centres to seek retrospective permission from Drama Assessment. As component 1 is a non- examined assessment, permission for the use of non-assessed candidates should only be sought in exceptional circumstances. It is the centre's responsibility to group candidates so that every group meets the minimum requirement of 3 performance candidate. If there are exceptional circumstances that mean this has not been possible, then the centre must email drama.assessment@pearson.com to request permission to use a non-assessed candidate and the written permission must be uploaded to the LWT along with the centre's work for their sample.

In 2023, there was work produced from a range of design candidates; with lighting and costume again being the most popular choices. There were some issues with the moderator not being able to clearly see some moments of the performance due to the lighting design; therefore, centres need to support candidates in considering their lighting design and the quality of the recording for moderation. 'Realism' as a chosen style was more challenging for candidates in a design role; in particular, lighting and sound. The design candidates tended to be more imaginative and creative when the work was episodic and contained elements of surrealism; however, this was not always the case.

Overall, the performances were creative and had clear intentions for the audience. A range of styles and genres were adopted, with a didactic and episodic approach being the most popular. It was reassuring to see so many candidates opting to take on a design role with many candidates really embracing this opportunity and creating work that was creative and incredibly supportive of the performers and their group's intention for the audience. Many candidates created ensemble style performances and these tended to benefit all members of the group. The ensemble performances were often well rehearsed and included a range of techniques and forms such as monologues. Performances that became too heavily focused on set changes, many properties and blackouts were often disjointed and did not benefit the candidates.

Best practice for the recording included:

- Clear, well-paced, introductions with candidates stating both their full name and candidate number in full length shot – at the beginning of the performance with no break before the performance.

- The use of A4 sheets with name and number held up for the camera to support the candidates in communicating the correct information.

- Candidates dressed in the same way for the introduction as in the performance itself, with candidates explaining any costume changes.

- The wearing of different, distinct costumes or clothes, with ensemble groups choosing different colour t-shirts rather than 'all blacks.'

- The provision of photographs of the sampled candidates in performance groups (if these were in full costume).

- Work that was labelled with the group number and the candidate numbers so that this information matched the information on the CCIS forms and the LWT

- Recordings that were from a fixed camera position and lighting did not impact the quality of visibility.

General summative advice for centres, based on the 2023 series:

Candidates should:

- Ensure the work is carefully rehearsed and polished for performance with a focus on creativity and impact on the audience.
- Engage fully with their role, thinking about how their role impacts the work as a whole.
- Work collaboratively and actively contribute to the exploration, refinement and rehearsal process.
- Shape and develop ideas practically rather than repeating and polishing without progression.
- Share their work in progress with the class to receive feedback for improvement.
- Use their research skills to inform their performance and the development of ideas.
- Make clear notes, including examples, throughout the process and reflect on their final performance straight after the performance takes place.

Teacher-assessors should:

- Devote 40% of teaching time to the devising process and the skills that candidates need to be taught in order to devise effectively.
- Select stimuli appropriate to the needs, abilities and interests of each individual group of candidates or cohort.
- Use verbal evaluation and discussion to support the candidates' development of their work, facilitating this process without directing or having creative input.
- Set deadlines to allow candidates to work to the final performance date or deadline.
- Ensure candidates have the opportunity to conduct technical and dress rehearsals and to consider any health and safety risks or hazards.
- Provide a supportive audience to allow candidates to be comfortable when performing.
- Record the performances and ensure that they are saved in the formats as set out in the ASG, as well as ensuring that the files are backed up on the Centre's network.
- Ensure the recordings are made from a fixed position with good quality visuals and sound.
- Provide clear introductions by candidate name and number.
- Ensure that the group numbers and/or the names of the performances are accurate on the CCIS form and match how the files are labelled.

Teacher – assessors must ensure that candidates adhere to the group sizes and timings for the Devised Performances in 2024

A group must contain between three and six performance students. In addition, there can be up to one designer per role, per group – making a possible maximum group size of 10 candidates (6 performers and 4 designers).

Where candidates (performance and design) do not meet the regulatory minimum performance requirement for AO2, marks awarded by the teacher - assessor **must be capped at level 2**, with a **maximum of 6 marks to be awarded**. There were some examples this year of candidates producing work below the regulatory timings; however, teacher-assessors did not always remember to apply the AO2 cap.

The recommended minimum performance times have been provided to ensure that each candidate within the group has sufficient time to access all levels of the assessment criteria:

3–4 performance candidates (group) 10 to 15 minutes
5–6 performance candidates (group) 20 to 25 minutes

Centres should be aware that performance times that are between the **regulatory minimum** (4 minutes) and the **recommended minimum** (10 minutes) may not allow candidates to evidence their skills fully in order to access all levels of the assessment criteria. In addition, teacher-assessors are required to stop marking after the maximum performance time has passed, this is to ensure that there is parity for all candidates nationally. The moderator will not consider any work after the maximum performance time.

Selection of sample for moderation

There was still some confusion in 2023 with regards to the sampling of candidates' work. Centres that followed the guidance in the ASG sent the correct work; however, a number of centres sent the work of all of their candidates, or they selected a sample that was not in line with the Specification requirements. In the 2019 series, the pre-selected sample was removed, and centres were required to send the work of their highest and lowest achieving candidate and a further sample of work (usually a maximum of 10 candidates' work in total, dependent on your cohort size) from a **maximum** of 4 performance groups.

The teacher- assessor must select the sample after the internal assessment has taken place to reflect the overall mark range of the cohort. It was noted in 2022 and again in 2023 that many more centres had thoroughly standardised the work of their candidates leading to more accurate marking. Pearson will not select the sample, the reason for this decision is because Pearson and the moderators do not know how centres have grouped the candidates, how many candidates are in each group, or which groups the highest and lowest achieving candidates are in.

The sample that centres select in 2024 must include the performance/design realisation and Portfolio Evidence of all sampled candidates. This should be selected from a **maximum of four different performance groups** (although this could be from as few as **one group** if there are 6 performance candidates and 4 designers in that group,

containing the highest and achieving candidates). Centre must try to send the work of all candidates in any selected group.

The sample selected by the centre must include:

- The highest overall scoring candidate
- The lowest overall scoring candidate
- The work of at least 8 further candidates with a range of marks between the highest and the lowest scoring candidates, ideally from the same groups as the lowest and highest achieving candidates.

The sample size tends to be the work of 10 candidates; however, there are occasions when the sample is smaller or larger than 10 candidates' work.

- If there are fewer than 10 candidates in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of all candidates
- If there are 10 candidates in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of all 10 candidates
- If there are 11 to 99 candidates in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must select the work of 10 candidates, from no more than 4 performance groups to include the highest and lowest achieving candidates based on their total mark out of 60.
- If there are 100 to 199 candidates in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of 15 candidates, including the highest and lowest achieving candidates. The work should be from as fewer groups as possible, with a maximum of 5 groups sent if candidates are all working in groups of 3.
- If there are 200+ candidates in the centre taking GCSE Drama, centres must send the work of 20 candidates, again to include the work of the highest and lowest achieving candidates. The work should be from as fewer groups as possible with a maximum of 7 groups sent if candidates are all working in groups of 3.

Moderators may contact a centre and request the work of additional candidates. This can be for a variety of reasons and centres must ensure that all work that is not sent in the original sample is in the centre, available for submission, with the Coursework Authentication Forms (NAS) completed and signed by the candidates and the teacher-assessor. There are further details regarding these procedures in the JCQ instructions for conducting coursework:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/coursework/instructions-for-conducting-coursework-2018-2019

Administration

It was noted by the moderating team that in 2023, communication from centres was generally good in resolving any issues and providing all of the relevant work required. The use of the LWT/A and the new documentation was reviewed for 2023 and

streamlined to support both Centres and the moderating team in preparation. The system will again be reviewed ready for the 2024 series.

Most of the administration for component 1 was completed accurately by centres and where errors occurred centres were generally very quick to resolve these issues. Centres do need to check the total mark accurately on the CCIS Forms and then transferred the total mark to Edexcel Online accurately. There was an increased number of cases in 2022 and again in 2023, where moderators had to contact centres to check the Centre marks, as the mark on the CCIS Form did not match the marks on Edexcel Online. Errors in imputing the Centre's mark can impact the final mark that the centre's candidates receive and as such all arithmetic must be carefully checked and all marks must be transferred accurately. It is the centre's responsibility to contact Edexcel Pearson directly to make any amendments to the marks submitted, the moderator is not permitted to make these changes on the Centre's behalf.

In 2023, it became a requirement for centres to place their work in attainment order, from the highest achieving candidate to the lowest achieving candidate on the CCIS Form. This clearly supported the moderation process. However, some centres continued to complete the form in candidate number order. The CCIS forms for 2024, will again be reviewed and streamlined. Only one CCIS form is required per centre and only the candidates selected to be in the sample need to be recorded on this document. In addition, when completing the CCIS form teacher-assessors must also ensure that they complete the candidates' full name and not just forenames and all group numbers are accurate.

Centres are reminded that the teacher -assessor and the candidates must sign the NAS form to authenticate the work. This signature can be an electronic signature. The ASG details how the Portfolio Evidence should be presented for moderation and how documents should be labelled on the LWT. This guidance will be streamlined and updated in the Autumn Term to support centres with the 2024 series. Where centres created one PDF document per candidate which included the NAS, Portfolio Evidence and any Additional Documentation, the moderation process was more straightforward. For the 2024 series, it will be a requirement to create on PDF form per candidate.

In 2023, a significant number of centres uploaded Portfolio Evidence with pages missing. Moderators only noticed this error if the six questions were used to structure the work and questions appeared to be missing or if the pages were numbered. Centre need to be careful to ensure that all pages are scanned in and not every other page. Whilst the moderating team contacted centres to raise this issue, it is the responsibility of the centre to check that all of the work is complete and accurate before submitting the sample to their moderator. In addition, centres are reminded that the work is not submitted by simply uploading the work to the LWT the orange button has to be pressed.

For the 2024 series, the teacher-assessor comments were removed from the CCIS form and added to the individual candidates' NAS form (Coursework Authentication Form). This was to ensure that the CCIS documents were smaller and easier to access. Several teacher-assessors provided detailed comments on the NAS and/or the candidates' Portfolio Evidence. Some teacher-assessors sign-posted where candidates had covered

each of the assessment objectives on the Portfolio Evidence - AO1, AO4; this was very supportive of the moderation process. Centres must ensure that they justify the marks that they have awarded, as this is a JCQ requirement. As such, centres must either annotate the candidates' Portfolio Evidence or write comments to justify the marks awarded on the CCIS Form. Some Centres in 2023 did not complete the comments on the NAS Form or annotate the Portfolio Evidence as required. Centres are also reminded that if annotating the Portfolio Evidence for AO1 and AO4, that they must remember to make notes on the NAS form to justify the marks awarded for AO2. In 2023, some centres did not comment on the application of the assessment criteria for AO2.

Pearson Feedback and Support to Centres:

Remark of Moderation (ROM)

These are completed by members of the senior team using the original Portfolio Evidence, and the Final Performance Recordings as well as the Assessment Forms which centres uploaded to the LWT/A. An Enquiry can be requested for the whole centre as the original moderation process will be repeated by the ROM moderator and centres will be charged for re-moderation unless centre marks are re-instated. A detailed report will be produced for each centre, providing feedback for the centre, and explaining the findings of the re-moderation process.

Drama Subject Advisory Team

Paul Webster, a full-time member of Pearson staff, has been available again throughout the 2023 series to respond to centre queries and to support centres via telephone and email contact as well as through social networking sites. This has proved successful. Paul and his team are available to support subject specific related queries: TeachingPerformingArts@Pearson.com

Candidate queries can be addressed to **students@pearson.com**.

It must be noted that the Subject Advisor has no access to centre data and cannot comment on the moderation process in terms of mark regression or on the content of E9 reports to centres. Where centres require more detailed information, a ROM must be requested for that paper.

Approval of material to be used or requests for adjustments to assessment processes are beyond the remit of the subject advisory team and queries of this nature should be raised with the Pearson Drama Assessment team (drama.assessment@pearson.com)

General queries relating to administration and entries should be made through Exams Officers or raised with Pearson Support Helpdesk.

Training from Pearson

Pearson has a programme of national face to face, free standardisation meetings, as well as online training. All details are available on the Pearson website via the training home page.

Conclusion

In the 2023 series of the 9-1 GCSE specification, it is pleasing to note how hard centres have worked to understand the requirements of the specification and the national standard. Many centres have accessed and used the support materials available on the Pearson website as well as attending inset training and purchasing some of the support materials and guides produced.

Centre marking in most centres is accurate in terms of the rank order of marks for candidates sampled and in placing the candidates in the correct levels for AO1, AO2 and AO4. The increase in internal standardisation has clearly supported teacher confidence in applying the assessment criteria accurately and teachers have a much better grasp of the National Standard in 2023 than seen in previous years. This is a continuation of the improvements seen in 2022. A small proportion of teacher-assessors have struggled to accurately judge the level at which their candidates are working. This is particularly evidence for AO1 where there is a larger spread of marks available. There is evidence of severe marking by centres at the lower end of the ability range; for example, where candidates have been able to explain their response to the stimuli, their intentions for the audience and some of their ideas and refinements in rehearsals but have not been awarded appropriate for this.

Equally, at the top of the ability range, some teacher-assessors did not always accurately assess their candidates' work, over-rewarding achievement when compared to the National Standard. It appeared that some teacher-assessors tended to assume that their highest achieving candidate was very often worthy of marks in the top level or full marks. Given the increased rigour of both assessment and content in 9-1 GCSE Drama, it is likely that for the first few years of the specification, only the very highest achieving candidates nationwide will consistently meet the demands of level 5 for component 1, particularly with regards to AO1 'Create and Develop'. The evidencing of candidates' practical ability to create and develop devised work through their theory portfolios is an entirely new skill at GCSE and as the Specification develops it is predicted that teachers and candidates will become more skilled at addressing this. In 2023, there was a mix in the calibre of work provided for moderation, with some candidates' performances being very unfocused or under-rehearsed.

Teacher-assessors must consider carefully when making judgements about the quality of their candidates' work. Free standardisation courses and materials provided by Pearson will continue to be available to support all centres in making these judgements, enabling the committed work of all teachers to be applied most effectively to all aspects of assessment and learning within 1DR0.01.

Candidates of Pearson GCSE Drama represent a wide and varied range of abilities, cultures and backgrounds. Their devised work for component 1 continues to reflect candidates' personal interests and experiences. Candidates' work on this component allows them further to develop the skills needed for creating devised work for performance, as well as furthering their grasp of each individually selected theme, topic or issue. The shift of focus to not only exploration, but to process, rehearsal and the completion of a final performance appears to have been welcomed and embraced by candidates, teacher-assessors and moderators alike.

Moderators in 2023, commented that in the vast majority of case GCSE Drama candidates were focused and committed to their work in Drama; for the entire team, there was a sense that it had been a highly positive experience and that candidates of all abilities had risen to the challenge of devising a performance, with very few candidates failing to complete something worthy of a mark against each of the assessment criteria.

Based on the 2023 series, centres should:

- Read/ review both the Specification document for GCSE Drama 9-1, the Administrative Support Guide (ASG) and the GCSE Drama 9-1 Guidance for Writing the Portfolio in preparation for delivering 1DR0.01.
- Make the most positive choice of stimuli material for each individual group of candidates/ classes/cohort – up to a maximum of 3 stimuli.
- Ensure that the very best possible recordings are made and selected for moderation, with a total of 4 performance groups **maximum.**
- **Ensure that all candidates in a chosen performance group form part of the selected sample.**
- Use this report as a reminder of best practice when making the recordings
- Use the standardisation materials to refresh and refine teacher-assessors' grasp of the National Standard.
- Refer closely to the Administrative Support Guide, the Specification and this report when supporting candidates with their timings for the Devised Performance and their timings and wordcounts for the Portfolio Evidence.
- Refer closely to the Administrative Support Guide when preparing materials for submission to the moderator and when selecting centre samples.
- Ensure that all materials uploaded to the LWT are accurately completed to include accurate marks and total marks and the inclusion of teacher-assessor comments and signatures.
- Ensure that the work of the entire cohort is ready to be sent to the moderator if a further sample is requested.